

November 10, 2005

**GENERAL PAY INCREASE AND SPECIAL RATES APPROVED
UNDER TITLE 38 UNITED STATES CODE (U.S.C.) 7455
(REPORT CONTROL NUMBER (RCN) 05-0827)**

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive authorizes approval of a general pay increase equal to the amount of the basic General Schedule (GS) increase effective January 8, 2006, for employees being paid special rates authorized under Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 7455, when necessary to ensure adequate staffing or competitive pay rates.

2. POLICY: It is VHA policy to authorize a general pay increase equal to the amount of the basic GS increase for employees being paid special rates authorized under 38 U.S.C. 7455 if the increase is necessary to ensure adequate staffing or competitive pay, and local funds are available to support the amount of the adjustment.

3. ACTION

a. Special rates must be increased by the amount of the GS increase unless the facility Director certifies that the existing rates are competitive and an adjustment is not necessary to maintain adequate staffing for the occupation. *NOTE: It is recommended that facility Directors consult with and consider the views of the local exclusive labor union before reaching a decision not to authorize an increase.*

b. To facilitate this process, each facility is provided a summary of the special rate authorizations covered by the annual review. The Workforce Information System Team distributes the summary to facilities through the Personnel Accounting Integrated Data (PAID) Control Points by October 31, 2005.

c. Signed certifications formatted in the manner shown in Attachment A must be submitted no later than November 30, 2005, to the appropriate Network Director (10N_/055) for coordination and processing. Copies of signed certifications must be faxed to the Compensation and Classification Service (055) at 202-273-7607. If a certification that "an increase is not necessary" is not received in 055 by December 9, 2005, the occupation will receive the GS increase.

d. Compensation and Classification (055) staff must contact the facility Human Resources Management Service (HRMS) to confirm receipt of certification that "an increase is not necessary." If the facility HRMS contact person has not received confirmation by December 16, 2005, the certification was not received by Compensation and Classification Service (055), and

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the occupation will receive the GS increase unless immediate action is taken. Increases granted as a result of certifications received past the deadline may not be rescinded.

NOTE: Advisory assistance on the provisions of this Directive may be obtained by contacting the Compensation and Classification Service (055) representative handling special rates for your facility.

4. REFERENCES

- a. Title 38 U.S.C. 7455.
- b. VA Handbook 5007, Part VI, Chapter 6, Paragraphs 2 and 3.

5. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: The Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations (055) is responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be directed to 202-273-9700.

6. RESCISSIONS: VHA Directive 2004-065 is rescinded. This VHA Directive expires January 6, 2007.

Jonathan B. Perlin, MD, PhD, MSHA, FACP
Under Secretary for Health

Attachment

DISTRIBUTION: CO: E-mailed 11/15/05
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ATTACHMENT A

**SAMPLE FORMAT FOR
CERTIFICATION THAT AN INCREASE IN SPECIAL RATES IS NOT NECESSARY**

I certify that existing special rates are competitive and an increase equivalent to the general schedule increase is not necessary to maintain adequate staffing.

Occupation

Reason

Medical Technologist, GS-644

Current rates are competitive with non-Federal health care facilities.

1. Signature of Certifying Official: _____
(Medical Center Director)

2. Facility: _____
(Enter Facility Name and Station Number)

3. Human Resources Management Service Contact Person, Telephone Number, and Date:

(Human Resources Management Service Contact Person)

Telephone Number: _____

Date: _____